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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8859
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4991
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2412
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1792
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3785
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1890
RUEHBA/AMCONSUL PERTH 0747
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000855

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, DRL/AWH
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [PINS](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: ETHNIC TURBULENCE IN KALIMANTAN

REF: 07 JAKARTA 3370 AND PREVIOUS

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b+d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: There has been ethnic turbulence in East Kalimantan in central Indonesia. Large crowds of indigenous Dayaks staged various rallies around the province, including blocking an entrance to an airport in Balikpapan, the provincial capital. The Dayaks are angered because none of the candidates in the East Kalimantan gubernatorial election on May 26 are from their community. Though there was no violence, rumblings from the direction of the Dayak community must always be taken seriously given the group's past willingness to take up arms. END SUMMARY.

DAYAKS DISTURBED

2 (U) There have been rumblings from the ethnic Dayak community in East Kalimantan. On April 28, large crowds of Dayaks staged simultaneous rallies across East Kalimantan Province calling for representation in the gubernatorial election scheduled for May 26. They demanded that the GOI postpone the election until their demands were met. In Balikpapan, around 500 tribesmen began their rally at the local General Elections Commission (KPUD) headquarters, where one of their leaders told Local Legislative Speaker Burhanuddin Solong, "We expect the election not to be organized until after our voices are heard. We feel dejected and disappointed because our aspirations have not been accommodated."

¶3. (U) The same group also attempted to enter the airport in Balikpapan, the largest in East Kalimantan. They were prevented from entering by local police, who had deployed eight truck-loads of anti-riot police, an armored car and water cannon to control the situation. The tribesmen then blocked an entrance to the airport, causing passengers to travel an alternative route which was much longer. No flights were delayed. In Samarinda, hundreds of Dayak protesters staged a rally in front of local KPUD offices, resulting in a minor scuffle with authorities. There were also rallies in Bontang, Tarakan and Malinau. There were no reports of injuries in any of the incidents.

A CONTROVERSIAL ELECTION

¶4. (U) Currently there are four gubernatorial candidates scheduled to compete in the May 26 election: Jusuf SK and Luther Kombong of the Golkar Party; Awang Faroek Ishak and Farid Wadjdy of the National Mandate Party; Nursyirwan Ismail and Heru Bambang of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P); and, Achmad Amins and Hadi Mulyadi from the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). Several of the candidates were reportedly born in Kalimantan, but none are native Dayak.

¶5. (SBU) It is not clear why no Dayaks were chosen to be on any of the tickets. The Dayak are a small minority in East Kalimantan, concentrated in the regencies of Malinau, Samarinda and Tarakan. Because their population is small in East Kalimantan, Dayaks do not have the political heft that they do in Central or West Kalimantan where they are much more numerous. Indeed, a candidate from the Dayak community, Cornelius Kimha, won the West Kalimantan governor's race last November, beating the Muslim Malay incumbent (reftel).

REASONS FOR CONCERN

¶6. (C) Rumblings from the direction of the Dayak community must always be taken seriously. Believing strongly as an indigenous people that they have rights in the Kalimantan region, Dayaks have taken up arms before. Dayaks, for example, killed over a thousand Muslim Madurese settlers between 1999-2001, primarily in the areas of West and Central Kalimantan. There have been no hints of violence at this point in East Kalimantan, but there are reasons for concern--Dayaks are unlikely to back down unless their demands are met in some way.

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